

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

If Sinclair is going to use the public airways for mudslinging, then they should afford equal time. Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11 was a theatrical release - one man's view that you had to pay for to see. What Sinclair is doing to claiming their "documentary" is news, when it is an actual one hour free smear against Kerry and for Bush. It's wrong. It's unfair. It shouldn't be allowed to happen without equal time.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.